

Title: Trash to Treasure
Format: Interactive Workshop
Presenters:
Kim Rizio
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At Key Biscayne Presbyterian School, we are a family that is passionate about protecting and preserving our unique, local habitats. Beyond the reaches of our island, we aim to instill each of our students with the desire and the ability to be global citizens on mission to shape a sustainable environment. Based on research of the “Children Are Citizens” initiative from Project Zero at Harvard University, we have designed a series of transdisciplinary projects that engage and capacitate our preschoolers and lower elementary students to be agents of change in our local and global community. One of these projects is the “Trash to Treasure” Project, which is designed to use the intersection of the arts and science to bring attention to an environmental issue within our community. Our art teacher, Kim Rizio, designed this project to transform plastic pollution from our island community into an interactive exhibit, in conjunction with the Village of Key Biscayne. Using inspiration from Bob Sluka of the Rocha Organization and Xavier Cortada, a local Cuban activist artist, Ms. Rizio designed the project to lead our students from bystanders to advocates that are leading others on paths to health and well-being for the human and natural world. The project will begin with a call to the local community to participate in several trash collection excursions. The Key Biscayne Community Foundation’s Citizen Science Project, Rescue Reef, and Debris Free Oceans (all local Non-Profits) will all be invited to participate. Students will use the collected trash to create an original multi-media piece that incorporates movement and media to engage and communicate our message. The piece will involve strands created from locally-collected pollutants. The piece will be installed in the village center and videotaped in a community engagement experience that will involve individuals from different generations working together. The framework for this delivery was inspired by several artist activists, including El Anatsui (metal quilts) and Judy Plaff. In our modern age, media is an important catalyst for change. Our video will be transferred to social media outlets that can connect with our community, other activists, and, hopefully, with local and state government. In the video, our children’s voices will tell the story behind the installation and will charge viewers to respond by combatting pollution in their own communities. In our interactive workshop, we will involve participants in various ways, including adding to our piece by creating their own trash strand. As stated by Bob Sluke, “Our actions are a moment in a chain of blessing or a chain of destruction. Everything we do has an impact of others.” Through the “Trash to Treasure” project, this is what we hope our children will learn, and ultimately, go to teach others.